DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 156 221 JC 780 220

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TITLE Macrobian Children Into Swans: Community Colleges in the Future.
INSTITUTION Social Engineering Technology, Los Angeles, Calif.
PUB DATE Nov 77
NOTE 54p.

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.83 HC-$3.50 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Change Agents; College Curriculum; *College Role; Community Colleges; Educational Alternatives; *Educational Change; *Educational Objectives; *Junior Colleges; Models; *Performance Based Education; Skills; Student College Relationship; Teacher Role
IDENTIFIERS Social Engineering

ABSTRACT

A new conceptual model of the community college is necessary to the maturation of the community college into a significant autonomous part of higher education. The requirements for a "transformed" community college are the establishment of a lifelong relationship with its students; a reconciliation of the academic and vocational functions which have traditionally been dichotomized; a focus on generic employment skills and competencies which will prepare students for a variety of career opportunities, and methods to certify these competencies; and structural changes in instructional methods, curricular content, entry/exit policies, administration and extracurricular activities which will involve learners, faculty, administrators and staff in a greater diversity of educational experiences. The "transformed" college must identify target populations; realize that each group has different educational needs because life will demand of each a different set of competencies. Proof of competence in these areas may be more important than degrees or college credits. The curriculum must be reorganized to reflect these new priorities; time schedules must be flexible to allow students to obtain the skills at their own rate counseling may need to be geared to helping each student establish areas of competence and topical foci which will serve as educational goals. (AYC)

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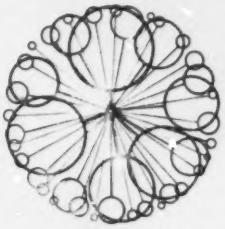

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COMMUNITY COLLEGES IN THE FUTURE

D. SAM SCHEELE

November 1977

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Social Engineering Technology

MACROBIAN CHILDREN INTO SWANS
A Distinctive Role for Community Colleges in the Future

D. Sam Scheele

The impending maturation of the community colleges might better be delayed. "Bending the twig while there's still time" will not produce a butterfly. Continuing evaluation and persistent faultfinding do not create a consensus from which a compelling new conception of what community colleges might be can be fashioned. Becoming an "adult" institution suggests development of a distinctive personality and style and assumption of a unique role among other institutions in the community. Community colleges are not there yet.

Instead of maturing, community colleges are still figuring out what they want to be when they grow up. Social critiques from the outside combine with inappropriate aspirations on the inside to produce institutional dysphoria. Doing another penetrating assessment would be counterproductive. If society's intention is to create a "flying tree," then current efforts toward improving community colleges are well directed. A litany of deficiencies is recited almost any time community colleges are discussed. Pointed out are poorly prepared students, unmotivated faculty, antiquated teaching methods, ineffective counseling, and overburdened administration. These shortcomings imply the existence of a clear conceptual model for what community colleges are supposed to be. This vague but pervasive conceptual model of what the ideal community college should be serves to misdirect efforts at institutional development. Correcting these shortcomings is probably impossible using the methods and approaches implied by the current vague model.

Introduction

The purpose of this paper is to suggest some new ingredients and a fresh form for the conceptual model of the community college. These new conceptions are intended for use by community colleges to make themselves over into special and significant institutions with their own rationale and methods. Even if there were enough money and the personnel resources to pursue

the old model, the results would be less than what the community colleges could be.

Implicit in virtually all proposals for improvement, and even in reform, of community colleges is the persistent ideal of the intimate, collegial instution of broad learning dedicated to the un-time-constrained goals of expanding the knowledge and horizons of eager students to create well-rounded persons. This ideal has served most colleges and universities at some time. But, most four-year colleges and universities no longer think in these terms when formulating concepts to guide institutional development. These institutions have so many other purposes, interests, and commitments that the old ideal seldom surfaces.

However, this old ideal needs to be supplanted if it is not to deform the maturation of community colleges. Particularly those institutions in urban minority-dominated locations need their own ideal.

	Old Ideal	New Vision
FORM	• Intimate • Collegial	• Ubiquitous • Opportunity-rich
PROCESS	• Broad learning content • Un-time-constrained • Expand knowledge and horizons	• Specific learning methods • Time-urgent • Provide skills and connections
PRODUCT	• Eager students • Well-rounded persons	• Whole persons • Successful learners-doers-teachers

TABLE I. Institutional Rationales

A fresh conception of the community college can be produced by the union of persistent problems with insightful initiatives. Otherwise, there is no urgency or impetus for institutional change. A new institutional raison d'etre for community colleges is needed.

These contrasting definitions of higher education are not self-explanatory. Beginning with basics such as "product," there is an idea about filling unknowledgeable, but eager, students with learning which they then use and expend over their lifetimes. This idea can be contrasted with the concept of providing specific information and training to already whole, but not fully developed, persons that will then enable them to experience success in life's processes o learning.

In the middle, the descriptions of process contrast:

(1) the idea of a broad foundation of learning content vs the idea of specific pilings of directly applicable learning experiences;

(2) asserting the primacy of the students' rather than the faculty of academic field's sense of timing about curricular sequences;

(3) the importance of demonstrating competence and style instead of acquiring skills and connections as the next steps for negotiation of life.

The change in institution forms described by the contrasting suggestions above indicate a small, bounded, and clearly defined organization with a staid character be replaced by an open, multiplistic, and developing organization that is actively developing its relationships. This change of form can serve to create new opportunities for individual advancement without the institution itself constantly growing. This is a significant difference in the budget- and enrollment-constrained years ahead--to say nothing of the public's waning confidence in public education.

Transmaturation

A radical reformation of the community college is necessary to change it into a significant autonomous part of higher education. This kind of institutional growing-up does not begin by getting a clear vision of what a community college might be "when it grows up" and then acting to implement that vision. This objective-realization process seldom works. It also

builds a lot of rhetorical fences.

Instead, we recommend suspending judgment about what community colleges should be. In place of theoretical development, the community colleges should commence with attempts to organize what could be. This should be based on a rationale for institutional development that uses trial actions with concrete results to create strong functional elements. The institution should be fashioned out of these successful elements. Efforts to shape institutional improvement from lofty goals and abstract principles is unlikely to work.

Demonstrated results from collaborative efforts with business, industry, government, and other organizations can transform community colleges into unique and significant institutions in their own right. Implementing nontraditional programs requires a consensual view to substantiate their degrees, curricula, and general education concerns.

Turning the community college into an effective institution for community development, particularly in minority-dominated communities, will not be accomplished without resistance. More of the same will not work. Many of the current issues and dilemmas in the community colleges are not conducive to putting together a new institution. Yet, these issues and dilemmas are the raw material out of which change can be accomplished. This article indicates some ways to use these unfit circumstances to create a new relevance for a community-based form of higher education.

Contrasting Form of Maturation

Rather than grow up only to be obsolete, we suggest that the adolescence of community colleges be prolonged. This means that community colleges will first become macrobian (over aged) before becoming something else (swans). The mini-analogy in this title is apt for several reasons. Adolescence is the age of trying and testing out. In most primitive cultures, it is the adolescents who are chiefly involved in and responsible for the everyday workings of the community. In another elaboration of

this metaphor--additional time for maturation is necessary to develop a new institutional paradigm that can enable community colleges to assume a unique place in the pantheon of institutions of higher education.

Organizing an institution to serve community needs for higher education in the 1980's and beyond will require that "little brother" become "big mama." Community colleges will have to do more than grow up to be what colleges were to be in the past. Many colleges and most universities have identities as societal institutions that bear little relationship to their earlier ideal. Therefore, this article is not about the maturation of community colleges, but delaying their maturation to achieve transmogrification.

Diagram A contrasts transformational with evolutionary maturation for community colleges. Evolutionary maturation suggests that the community college will become a stronger part of a more monolithic progression of education. In this progression, community colleges will mature into stronger and more specialized institutions for providing the first two years of higher education for more students. This pattern of differentiation for community colleges parallels the gradual emergence of junior high schools to serve as a transitional institution between elementary and secondary schools.

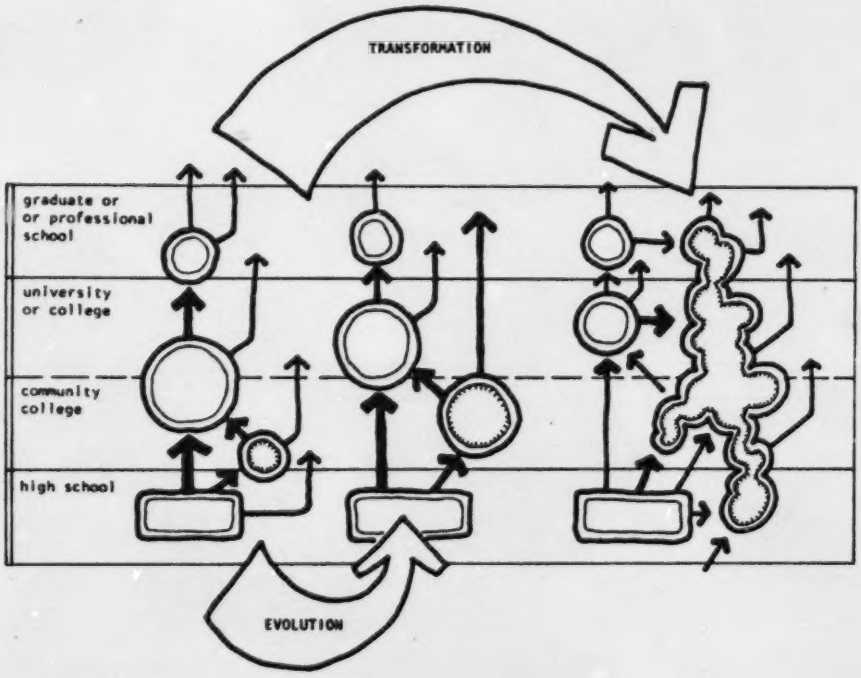


Diagram A. Community College Maturation

If community colleges mature in this evolutionary way, greater numbers of students in the future will be served by the community colleges. Students will both go on to four-year schools as well as enter the work force from certificate programs. The quality of the particular educational experiences may improve, but an increasing number of students will not be adequately served by such community colleges.

It is likely that the staff of community colleges which simply revolve will feel more acutely that there is little they can do for the under-prepared students. The numbers of these students will grow rapidly because of the overly determined qualities of programs that develop in institutions locked into a progression--the raw material is produced by one set of others and the finished product is specified by another group. A considerable amount of administrative inertia and political investment reinforce the developmental pattern for maturation.

However, in the case of community colleges, there are a number of reasons why higher education needs to enhance the formation of unique roles for community colleges--a transformational maturation. From 1968 to 1974, the percentage of male high school graduates electing to go on to college dropped from 64% to 49% (the lowest figure since 1960). The number of white males signing up for college has decreased from 1.2 million in 1968 to 840,000 in 1974. At the same time, the number of women and minority students electing to go on to, or return to, college has increased.

With the most choiceful segment of the education market--white, male, high school graduates--rethinking the merits and attractiveness of higher education, other segments can also be expected to reevaluate their educational needs. The observation of William Ferrets, staff associate for the American Association for Higher Education, is likely to be predictive of the years immediately ahead: "Going to college has lost its magic, while not going has lost its stigma."

These general statistics are amplified by subjective observations. Students are disappointed by most of their current educational experiences. An

increasing number of mature and older students are present in community colleges and they expect more from higher education. More working adults seek specialized training to qualify for promotion or to find new careers that will increase their earning power. Still other adults find themselves technologically or economically displaced and in need of training to gain marketable skills. Among those seeking training in specific skills will be a number of graduates from four-year institutions who are unable to find employment and need to be outfitted for the work force.

On the other hand, community colleges will have stiffer competition for the recent high school graduate from the regular four-year colleges and universities. These institutions need to maintain or increase their enrollments to support their current operations. However, there is a smaller pool of high school graduates, many of whom seem less interested in higher education. Along with a fiscal tightening, the mutual accommodation of the great expansion years in higher education is ended.

These factors suggest that transformation rather than development is a better strategy for the community colleges to follow in institutional maturation. The transformed community college is also depicted in diagram A above. This concept of a community college is aberrant to present ideas of what college should be like. This new institution would offer a much wider array of programs. Offerings would range from short courses, institutes, and refresher (in-service) programs to a panoply of two-year certificate programs.

More of the available time for scheduling would be used with evening, late afternoon, and weekend offerings. Many programs would be offered in conjunction with particular employers, groups of employers, or professional groups including both private and public entities.

The majority of learners would come to this kind of community college from the world of work rather than from high school. Others would come as graduates or transfers from four-year institutions and graduate schools. They would come to the community college not only as learners but as

instructional assistants, tutors, and other staff positions.

A general framework for a transformed community college is illustrated below. This is not intended as a blueprint for an institutional structure, but a tentative sketch to suggest an alternative path for maturation that will not result in a moribund institution.

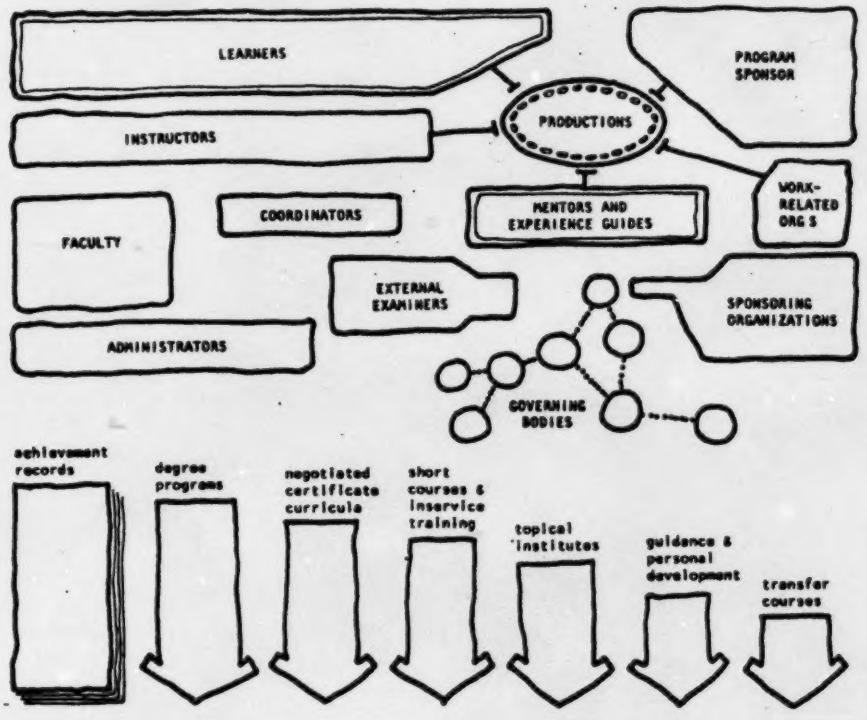


Diagram B. General Program Framework

There is more implied by the diagram than is explicitly obvious. For example, use of the term learner instead of student implies a recognition of a need to destigmatize the learning role. Changing and elaborating diagrammatic representations of organizations can be used as a heuristic approach to guide change.

An important requirement for a transformed community college is to establish a recognized life-long achievement record. Such a record would be "controlled by the learner and contain a wide range of biographical

and informational items to document the person's experiences. To complement these achievement records, learners would be encouraged to work on "productions" which could result from a variety of projects including the arts and accounting through the sciences to investigative journalism. These productions would go into a "portfolio" to demonstrate the learner's competence.

Achievement in most course work and programs would be validated by external competency examinations and field trials. Instead of certification by faculty contact hours plus acceptable completion of assignments and the competence achieved, learners would be judged by community standards reflected by external examiners.

In addition to traditional faculty positions, there would be a number of other important teaching roles. Instructors would augment training with problem-solving assignments and tutorials in special techniques. Team teaching would be encouraged. Mentors would be designated to serve small learning groups. Work-experience placement coordinators would identify positions of interest and match them with appropriate learners. On-the-job supervisors would guide individuals in their work and review their experiences. External examiners would perform certifications.

Such a transformed community college would foster expectations for a continuing relationship with individuals on either a part- or full-time basis, as both learners and instructors, throughout their adult lives. Alumni groups performing community service activities would be encouraged and facilitated.

Educational Academy or Trade School

No discussion of the future for the community colleges would be complete without raising the dichotomy: to be an educational academy or a trade school. If there is an answer, it is to accomplish the purposes of both, using the methods of neither. Formats for educational offerings are required that can enable old knowledge to produce fresh truths for the learner. This can work in two directions. Academic knowledge needs to

be translated into applied guidance for given circumstances. Theoretically derived insights need to be assembled into situational constructs that exemplify their truth.

For example, traditional courses, such as literature or history, can adopt an active contemporary posture. This new posture can use modern writings or current events as the subject for traditional classes. The students would be involved in a critique of contemporary literary forms, such as: the administrative memo, the proposal plan, the protest statement, the grievance, the news release, a contract, and so forth.

This approach directs learners' attention to a fresh literature where form was still being discovered, defined, and developed. As an initiating experience it involves the learner and recognizes his or her contributions. Learners who become interested in literature in this way can be expected to move on to more traditional literary concerns, recognize current controversies, and understand what they have to say about "now."

The purpose of such a contemporary literature course would not be simply to teach particular reading and writing skills. Its motivating purpose would be to introduce an adult to the world of literary form and criticism using as a vehicle the study of the ordinary literature being produced at the time--literature which they will be dealing with and likely producing.

To amplify with another example, history could be introduced by exploring a real situation of significance in the community. The situation might be a controversial mental health planning project or a conflicting labor dispute. Learners in teacher-led explorations into the background of current situations would encounter the dilemmas of history for themselves. Following this approach would mean that the problems and practices of historical inquiry would be vividly illustrated. This will normally produce a continuing interest in history. Once sparked, such interest can be led to more traditional and abstract fields of historical study. Such direct efforts at constructive history for a real situation provide impetus for the learner to seek links with historical traditions and to understand history as a way of knowing.

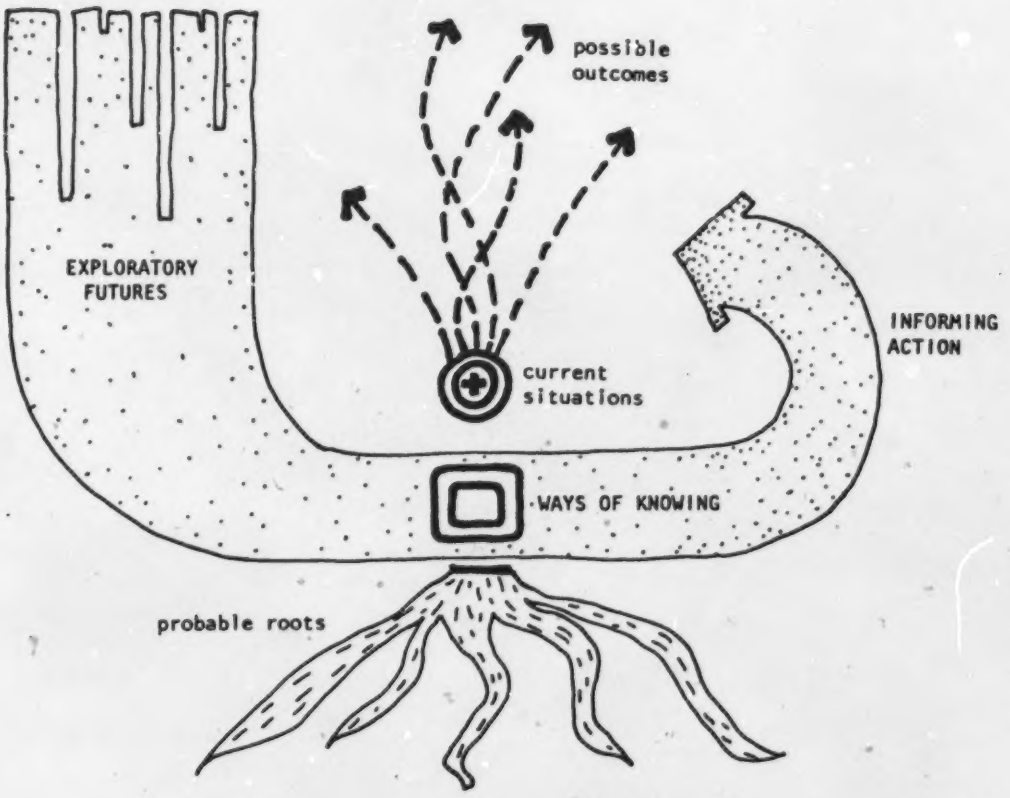


Diagram C. Past and Future in Present Learning

Moving out from their desciplinary bases, teachers of philosophy, writing, sociology, art history, psychology, and mathematics could participate in teaching technically-based courses. For example, a course about the fashion industry could incorporate: psychologists about the traditional symbolism in fashion; writing instructors on producing copy for fashion advertising; sociologists describing the role of fashion in the construction of reality; art historians on fashion as folk art; and mathematicians to depict the models of distribution chains, ordering practices, and inventory control measures for fashion products.

These could be structured as intensive supplemental classes. They could be team-taught parallel to the traditional basic classes. Each course would have a topical focus for student self-definition, as in the fashion technology

example. These topical studies could provide the opportunity for the faculty to experience innovative applications of their knowledge. Learners could use these experiences to usurp their interests and become connected with the larger community.

Establishing Career Positions as a Product of Education

In the short-term future, the next ten to fifteen years, the number of new career positions in presently established categories will seldom be sufficient to warrant efforts by community colleges to set up targeted training programs. On the other hand, business and government will need many qualified individuals for new kinds of positions. For these new positions, it is impossible now to set up narrowly-determined training programs or to even establish job specifications. These new positions haven't been defined yet.

This change in job characteristics in the 80's is similar to what happened to products during the 1950's and 1960's. It became normal to expect that half of consumer expenditures would be for products that did not even exist a decade earlier. Similarly, the job market in the 1980's and beyond will be characterized by 20 to 40 percent of the work force being employed in positions that did not exist or were undifferentiated five years earlier. This means that career-relevant education must concentrate on teaching the processes by which positions are defined and on how to move from one position to another, rather than imparting a predetermined cluster of skills.

Community colleges can become an agent for the educational system to work with employers in preparing individuals to create and perform these new roles in the world of work. Training can be provided for both the acquisition of skills peculiar to new positions and in more generic employment skills called careering competences.

These generic employment skills include how to: recognize ones distinctive qualities; build networks of relationships; become part of groups and fields of interest; be recognized for activities; use relationships to gain mobility; and magnify the efforts of oneself and others. These skills build on the folk wisdom often expressed in cliches used by successful people to account

for their fortune. Examples include: being in the right place at the right time; knowing who you know as well as what; and if at first you don't succeed, trying and trying again.

Further, community colleges can become society's agent in providing assistance to both public and private employers to fit the work to be done (jobs) to those who are available (people). Undertaking facilitation activities would involve the community college in establishing work incentives, creating programs to account for productivity and distribution of rewards (such as Scanlan Plans), providing training to work teams that would enable them to actively engage in the ongoing socio-technical adaptation of the positions to the work necessary to be accomplished, supporting the avocational interests, and instituting split-assignment practices to aid employees in moving from one position to another.

Reorienting the Basics

Reformulating the basic features of higher education in the light of the current dilemmas would be one way to create a high-performance organizational framework for instructional activities. The little extras that make some current instruction highly effective have to become the new basics. A first step to improve the organization for instruction would be to make each and every activity of the community college instructive. Even the processes by which prospective students find out about course offerings could be designed to achieve instructional purposes. If you think about it, everyday life more resembles the administrative governance and support functions of colleges than it does most classroom and laboratory experiences.

Following this precept means that learners who apply for financial aid, register for class, look for part-time employment, engage in campus affairs, or pursue recreational interests should find these experiences arranged to produce valuable lessons. The instructional framework for the community college should insist that virtually all the school's resources be arranged in ways that make them accessible and motivating.

Gaining everyday acceptance for this wider conception of an instructional

framework is more difficult than winning rational acknowledgement. It means the involvement of almost all of the community college's staff and classified personnel in rearranging the ways that ordinary things are done to increase their instructional impact.

Once the implications of a broad instructional framework are understood, then the questions about how to put together the desired arrangements out of the present staff can be answered. This requires a strategy which utilizes each individual's aspirations and hidden agenda to motivate the necessary extra efforts to rethink all the ordinary procedures to produce experiential education.

Structural Changes in the Institution

The following comparative lists identify the major structural features of education in community colleges. For each feature of the present arrangement, an alternative possibility is suggested. These suggestions are directed to improving the performance of the institution. This new definition of purpose implies that education is intended to improve ones chances as well as abilities.

The alternative model of the community college suggested for the future would widen the opportunities and raise the skills for living and enjoying life for each individual involved. Learners, faculty, administrators, staff, and participants from the community will all benefit from the diverse activities the community college can consciously create.

INSTRUCTION

	Assumed Forms and Methods		Future Arrangements and Approaches
(1)	fixed instructional schedule	(1)	variable schedule classes
(2)	unit-length classes (semester or quarter)	(2)	modular instructional units (cycles)
(3)	single-level teaching	(3)	multi-level teaching
(4)	evaluation testing	(4)	evaluation as education
(5)	courses defined by subject	(5)	topical themes for courses

(6)	pedagogically-based grading	(6) competency-based grading
(7)	evaluation by instructor alone	(7) external examination to supplement instruction
(8)	high achievement classes	(8) integrated multi-level seminars
(9)	remedial skills training	(9) skills application training

AUGMENTING INSTRUCTION

	Assumed Forms and Methods	Future Arrangements and Approaches
(1)	student counseling	(1) careering skills training
(2)	student information office	(2) life-directing information
(3)	learning laboratories	(3) instructional assistance
(4)	instructional television for courses	(4) teacher-learner collaboration in producing presentations
(5)	library facilities	(5) gatekeepers to knowledge areas
(6)	advisory committees	(6) individual mentors

ENTRY - EXITING

	Assumed Forms and Methods	Future Arrangements and Approaches
(1)	high school liaison with guidance staffs	(1) performances & presentations for high schoolers
(2)	community relations	(2) community involvement
(3)	student records	(3) student accomplishment information
(4)	placement office	(4) employer participation in learning
(5)	career "days" and "fairs"	(5) exploratory project assignments in organizations

(6)	career awareness	(6)	job design and transition assistance

ADMINISTRATION

	Assumed Forms and Methods		Future Arrangements and Approaches
(1)	financial aids	(1)	learning enablements (cash, positions, services)
(2)	course development	(2)	design of educational experiences
(3)	program assessment	(3)	pluralistic evaluation
(4)	institutional planning	(4)	establishing administrative framework for individual brokering
(5)	resource acquisition	(5)	support negotiation

EXTRA CURRICULAR AFFAIRS

	Assumed Forms and Methods		Future Arrangements and Approaches
(1)	intercollegiate sports	(1)	showcasing abilities and building reputation for the college
(2)	intramural sports	(2)	participants taking management responsibilities for activity programs
(3)	student clubs and associations	(3)	connections to opportunities
(4)	publications	(4)	community information exhibiting student competence
(5)	recreational activities	(5)	leisure contacts
(6)	avocational facilities	(6)	business and entrepreneurial laboratories
(7)	performing arts programs	(7)	appearances with gifted professionals.

Table II. Comparative Educational Features

Targeting a Clientele

There is a wider clientele for community college services than is usually considered. Most community colleges direct their primary attention to attracting recent high school graduates. Those who are interested in qualifying for job-related advancement are considered next. Providing access to higher education for older adults who have developed educational interests is another market. Recently, recognition has come for the needs of the underemployed person aged 25 to 40.

The underlying traits of these distinctive service populations (market segments) can be used to create a marketing-oriented approach. Simple demographic definitions do not adequately describe market segments. What is required are descriptions of unique market segments that recognize differences in their life situations and personal aspirations.

In a marketing program, it is necessary to improve the appeal of the product or service as well as the buyer's confidence in the supplier. Being all things to all people will not work. Effective marketing is based on matching clearly defined market segments of learners with carefully tailored educational services provided by a highly respected supplier. For instance:

GENERAL DESCRIPTIONS	DEFINED SEGMENTS
High School Graduates	• finding out what they want • could not afford other choices • hedge on not making it
Second Chancers	• not completed high school • dropped out of school, now returning • chose military service, want a new choice
Advancement-Necessitated Certification	• qualification for promotion • move from volunteer to staff • gain entry to in-service training programs

Older Student	• exploring transitions • mid-career crisis • alternative to dispair • establishing options

Table III. Learning Segments for Community Colleges

Transformed Community College

This presentation is not a blueprint for the community college of the future. It is a first speculation on a new institutional form. Hopefully, it will serve as a basis for participative planning by community groups, potential learners, and college staff to turn community colleges into effective institutions of higher education with their own unique role and responsibilities in the society.

The diagram below indicates the central function and institutional role of the transformed community college in providing for individual and community development. This implies that not only do learners have educational experiences that promote their development, but that the doers in the community and teachers in the college also continue their personal development. Creating a wide transinstitutional base for mutually supportive interaction makes it more likely to achieve the shared goal of community development.

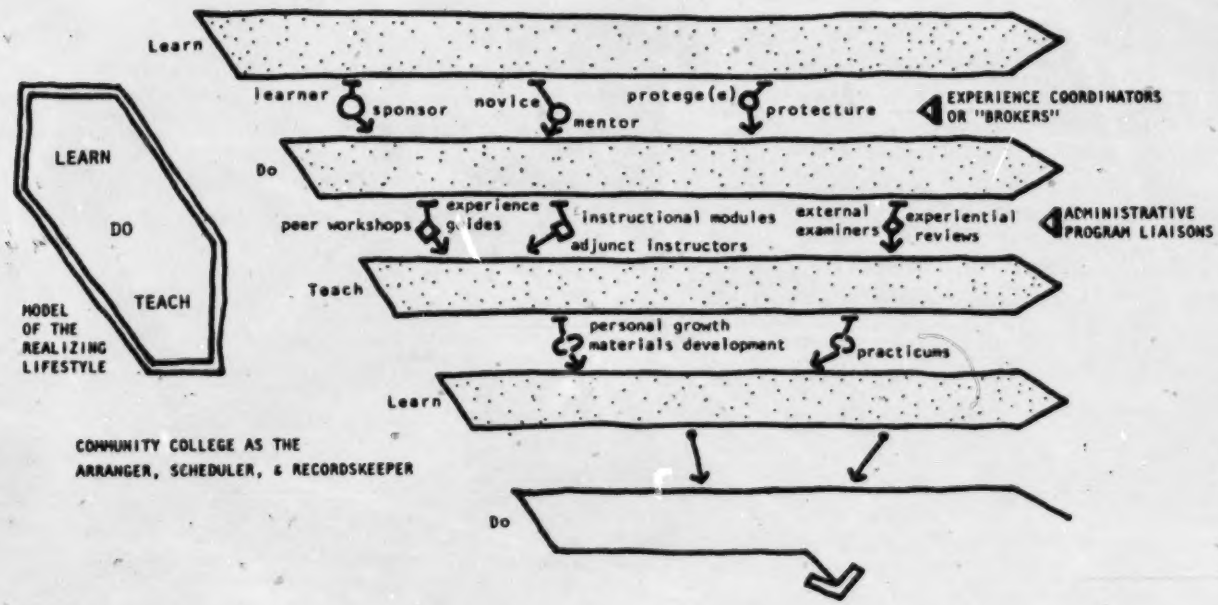


Diagram D. The Learn-Do-Teach Cycle: Supplying Connectedness

The remainder of this paper describes some of the principal features of a transformed community college. The features are not discussed in any particular sequence. Different versions of these features might be employed to accomplish similar objectives. The "right" features have to be worked out for the situation at hand by those who will be responsible for their implementation. Each concept is independent and could be instituted separately.

Negotiating Specific Meanings for Education

The meaning of educational experiences have come to be rooted in a common and familiar order. Proverbally, this is expressed as "readin', 'ritin', and 'rithmetic." Many changes have been introduced as experiments or alternatives. But their labeling as such, in fact, confirms the basic orthodoxy of the education process. For the most part education, in the commonly accepted sense, involves certificated adults holding classes for registered learners during prescribed periods.

notions about uniformity, standardization, and interchangeability that characterize much of the purposive actions of an industrial society have also permeated its educational processes. Thus, uniform degrees and certifications have supplanted the far more specific, yet variable, measures of education such as the prestige and noteworthiness of the institution, the reputation of the particular faculty members, and the unique accomplishments of the learner.

Uniform, standardized, interchangeable degrees serve as a kind of currency for a society that was increasingly mobile -- socially, geographically, and technically. Depending on a third party to certify education was more reliable and defensible for employers than selecting employees based on the reputation of the institution, knowing the faculty, or understanding the learner's accomplishments.

Educational institutions themselves, being large employers of their own certified products, lent great credibility to this system. Society continues to change. The meritocratic scheme of college degrees is no longer sufficient to qualify individuals for economic and social positions. Formal qualifications and requisite experience are not less important than special qualities and

unique experience. Positions are less often created as a function of the social and administrative order, but are increasingly asserted and negotiated to serve the particular requirements of the situation at hand.

The economic slowdown of the 1970's has contributed to a "tightness" in the job market. To some extent this has masked more profound changes in the ways employers view prospective employees. The rationale underlying why a job is created and how a position is defined are shifting from "filling a position" to "doing the job well." Industrially engineered job descriptions are being replaced by socio-technical problem solving. Individuals were once primarily recruited for positions determined by such abstract concepts as the organizational structure and professional specialization. Now specially suited individuals are sought for roles that are fashioned to increase the capability and interdependency of each work team, who collectively define the organization.

The lower the position and the more bureaucratized the organization the less likely it is that these changes have occurred. But the direction of change from the industrial society to the idiomergent era is clear and the demand for higher productivity imperative. A new order for the world of work is being fashioned. The community college can play a significant role in facilitating these transitions as a change agent in the community. Adopting this role would assist not only people and employers in creating productive positions but government, and thereby us all, who have a stake in a highly productive and functioning society. The dollar crisis and continuing downward valuing of U.S. products in relation to those of other advanced nations make this more apparent.

The observations above are described in terms of the world of work. Parallel changes can be anticipated in other aspects of life. For example, teamwork is increasingly emphasized in modern management theory. The kinds of specialties that make up a successful management team are taken more for granted. We can anticipate that employment agreements for retaining teams of individuals as a group will be worked out in the future. Already it can be noted, groups of managers, research and development specialists, even academic scholars often move together from one organization to another.

The time dimensions of employment can also be expected to change. Over-simplified, during the past fifty years piecework gave way to hourly employment which, in turn, has given way to salaried employment. Guaranteed-income plans are now

being actively considered. Wide variety in compensation plans is necessary, but the expected duration of employment has changed and the interests of employees in their own careers have become very distinct from the organization's concern with work force continuity. New forms of employment are likely to become more prevalent as the need for improving productivity and performance becomes paramount.

One form of employment that is likely to expand is time-limited and contractually-based jobs. We might call this the gig -- since in many respects it resembles that form of employment for musicians. An employment pattern based on the gig has several advantages for employers: fixed costs, limited commitment, minimal responsibility for intra-group relationships, and tight tailoring to the task at hand. For employees it offers guaranteed pay for an engagement, opportunity to renegotiate based on performance, chance to build an independent reputation, and control over division of tasks. For both, this form of employment permits easy adding of clauses to cover future expectations, establishment of rewards and penalties based on performance, and the capitalization of efforts or deferred payments for work completed.

Accomplishing Education as a Part of Life

Education is often viewed by the community and learners as a "time out" from life. Teachers also have a tendency to implicitly assume that a learner's time is available to be spent and not a resource for which they compete with other needs. This means that community colleges expect a learner to spend some number of hours on assignments. Most frequently it is assumed that this time is spent evenly over the semester with some slight increases during the final weeks.

There is some recognition that the perception of time is related to age. Youth perceives time as passing more slowly with given time horizons seemingly farther away and periods of commitment apparently much longer. However, the factor of how time is experienced by individuals in different roles and life stages is seldom considered in educational planning.

That the community can serve as a locus for educational experience has been espoused by almost all alternative educational programs. Often, such programs shift educational costs to other institutions and, for example, soon use up the enthusiasm of volunteer mentor-teachers from the community.

Life-long education was invented to define a potential "market" for educational services in order to justify new bureaucracies. Life-long education was not viewed as an unmet requirement, but as an unexploited opportunity. Therefore, the basic form for the life-long learning is supplier-oriented -- a new place to sell more of what we have. The relationship of supply and demand has reversed. Education now needs to be market-oriented -- providing an attractive something for a recognized need.

Beyond Credit to Competence

Based on their societal role to certify learning, institutions of higher education have grown enormously in size since World War II. Curricula for certified education have proliferated both vertically and horizontally. The general baccalaureate degree is now complemented by many specialized undergraduate degrees. A broad spectrum of master's degrees and subject-specific doctoral degrees have been created. Even the Doctor of Philosophy, once awarded primarily to contributors to the body of knowledge, is now granted in a panoply of professional fields.

In the other direction, two-year colleges have created an array of one- and two-year certificate programs. The range of topics covered by these specialty certificates is continually expanding. Increased demand for vocationally relevant instruction is creating additional pressure for short-term offerings covering specific topics. With this narrowing focus, the general value of each specialty program is reduced. Short courses and institutes are also increasingly certificated. Few programs once adopted are dropped.

One way of looking at instructional programs is to say institutions of higher education are producing units of credit in certified programs for a particular price -- even when the cost is paid by the public. The value of certified credits comes from the standards and reputation of the institution. These are reflected in recognition given the credits and degrees by accrediting bodies, professional groups, or business organizations. Each "degree" certifies that the recipient has been exposed to a prescribed course of study delivered by certificated personnel and has performed acceptably to the institution.

The number of different degrees has proliferated. The quantity of degree holders has increased. At the same time, the perceived quality of most degrees has deteriorated. This has caused the value of degrees in the job market to be eroded.

Employers find certified educational programs to be unreliable guides to the acceptable performance of prospective employees. The possession of a degree is not sufficient to discriminate between a greater number of persons competing for fewer positions in a tight economy. The diminished value of certifications earned from institutions of higher education in obtaining higher pay for better jobs is being confirmed in the job market. Starting salaries in real dollars commanded by recent graduates in almost all specialties are less than those earned by the entering graduates of 1969.

The certification of learning has lost its appeal with employers and its relevance to employees. What can replace it? We believe it will be the certification of competence. Competence can be recognized whether it was gained through, or apart from, formal instruction provided by institutions of higher education. The demand for acquiring competence through direct experience has been growing. Examples of demand for the experiential acquisition of knowledge range from alternative therapies to computer programming; from management of voluntary associations to radical economics for community organization. The emphasis of many new instructional offerings is learning by doing.

While satisfaction from consumption has been "going down," the dollars spent to gain participation in activities have been going up. Oversimplified, people are eating less and enjoying CB radio more. Translated from the commercial world to the marketplace for education, this means that the coursework designed to be "consumed" by learners for their edification and pleasure can be expected to go down. At the same time, learners can be expected to increasingly seek opportunities to participate in specialized activities which provide experiences that enable learners to make connections with opportunities and gain competence in particular skills.

A Trap and a Chance for Minority Students

The community college is not an unqualified good for minority learners. It can be a chance for minority learners to find the contacts and acquire the skills that can give their lives greater self-direction. But, the community college can also trap minority learners by making them better prepared to accept limited participation and to be guided by stereotyped futures.

Emphasis on the formal content of subject areas tends to truncate the career possibilities for the better learners and give a sense of ineptness to most of the rest. In general, one would expect a traditional, academically rigorous community college program for minorities to result in a few top students going on to institutions of higher education with many getting advanced degrees leading to highly institutionalized careers -- benefiting to some extent by affirmative action programs. For most of the rest of the minority students, the effect of this kind of community college and subsequent higher education experiences would be to confirm their disadvantaged beginnings and create frustrations by stimulating wider awareness while providing little knowledge of how to act on it.

In a similar way, counseling services and financial aid programs tend to increase students' dependence and decrease self-esteem. The bureaucratization of assistance takes few clues from the individuals's specific situation. Instead, it imposes general rules, many of which are counterproductive. Learners realize they are objects for counseling and guidance activities -- cases to be handled -- not clients to be served.

Much of the direction given learners emphasizes overcoming constraints, not realizing opportunities. To the extent that the educational offerings of a community college repeat the style and form of instruction used in the secondary school, they do not help the minority learner. In fact, they probably don't help any learner. If the lecture-with-homework pattern of instruction produced results in secondary schools, then those who could benefit from this kind of instruction already have. There is no justification for repeating these experiences in community college, except a paucity of clear alternatives.

The community college should not simply create courses based on stereotyped concepts of what jobs exist and what careers are possible in the community. Such educational offerings will not help and will likely hinder learners in the more significant task of making positions for themselves.

In order for community colleges to provide more chances and set fewer traps for minority students, their offerings should be clearly differentiated from those of the secondary schools. Probably community college offerings should also be distinct from those of the universities and four-year colleges. These institutions have developed a recognized form for their services which has established a clear demand. Increasing competition for fewer high school graduates seeking higher education means product differentiation is necessary. Demand will exist for distinct offerings that promise to produce results even though they are nontraditional, not well recognized, and lack prestige.

The community college can supply job connections and opportunities to experience different settings for learners to explore. These services enable learners to identify their unique skills and interests. Community colleges should provide a continuing series of chances for learners to demonstrate their skills and accomplishments to those who could be significant in helping them get done what they want to do. This does not mean a vocational emphasis for courses. Rather, it means more contact with what's going on in the world and the teaching of careering skills about how to function in the world of work.

A Matrix Organization for the Curriculum

Continuing examination of ways to organize the curriculum and determine how the curriculum relates to success is unlikely to produce any new imperatives. The many different ways to categorize the topics in a curriculum are likely to be equally useful or unhelpful. One idea that deserves attention, however, is to use two contrasting sets of categories to subdivide the curriculum. This device will at least permit the management of a more differentiated menu of offerings.

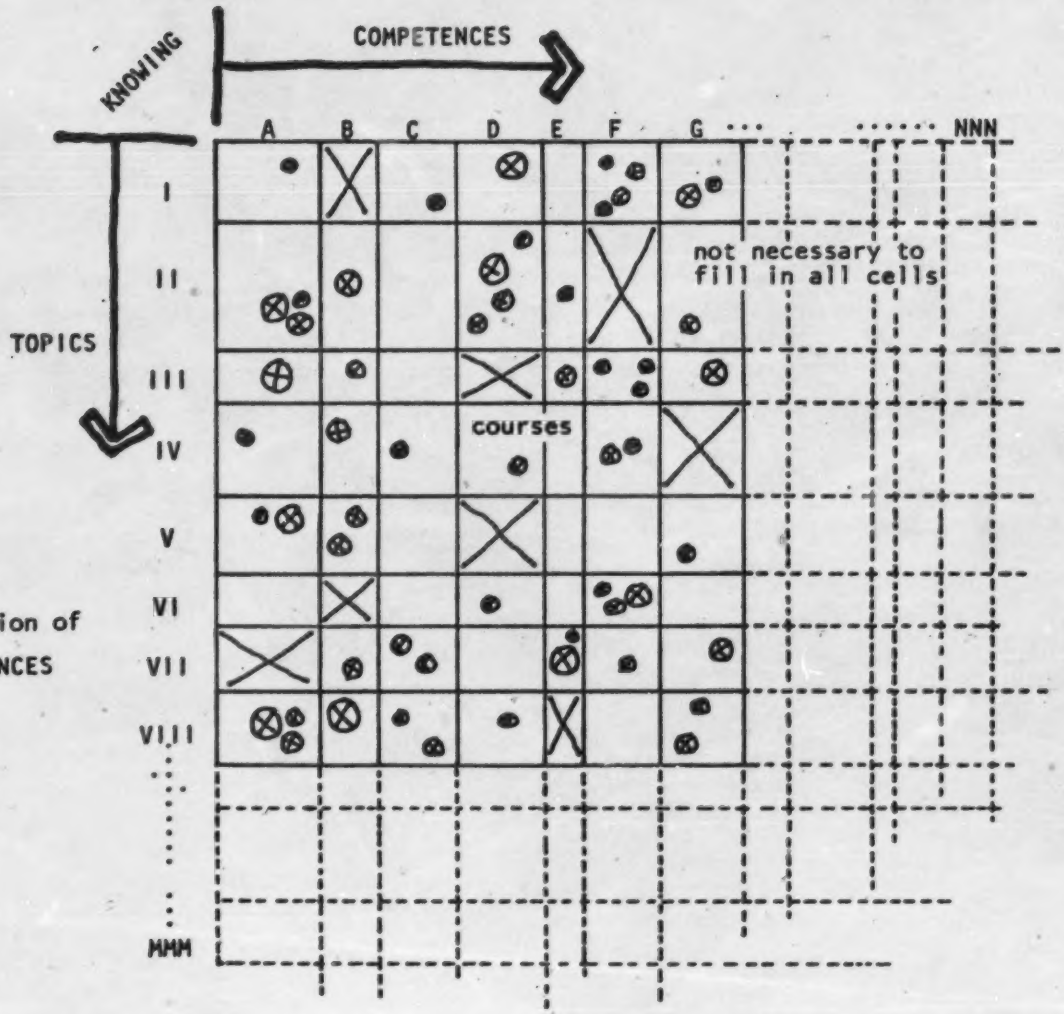
Opposing arguments for curricular reorganization are familiar. One, mounted by pseudo-pragmatists argues for a return to the basics of education. This usually means imparting fundamental abstract ideas and basic skills which are common to many different pursuits. This type of education emphasizes teaching the invariants. These are supposedly stable requirements for participation in any pursuit. However, connection between knowledge and its application in everyday life is left to the learner. This, of course, is the critical connection.

From another side comes arguments for greater topical relevance in the curriculum. In an increasingly specialized world, the constructivists assert, only those concepts and techniques learned with immediate potential application in situations at hand are relevant. This educational approach asserts that the repeated coupling of application and knowledge in different situations will produce in the learner an understanding of the underlying ideas. At the same time, the learner will find out how things function (or don't) in the community and its organizations. These distinct approaches can supplement one another in a curriculum organized in a matrix form. Particular skill areas can be used to define one axis and subject areas the other. This matrix approach can enable learners to do both. Simultaneously learners can explore a number of specific situations of interest which have marketability to employers while, at the same time, they can fulfill requirements for acquiring basic skills with transfer value for continuing higher education. Another benefit from a matrix organization for the curriculum would be the stimulation of more team teaching for courses. It also encourages more outside experts and guest lecturers to be integrated in offerings.

One example of a matrix curriculum that might be useful for a community college is illustrated next. This matrix curriculum has kinds of competence on one axis and topics of interest on the other. This means that basic competences (such as fundamental mathematics, written communication, or interpretation of information from various sources) could be taught in courses with different topical emphasis, such as chemical processing, human services, or artistic performances.

Translate Present
Offerings by MAPPING

Establish New Priorities



Specify Certifications: competences= (3)A, (1)B, (2)C, +(4) from D, E, or G

topics= major sequence in IV, (4) in III, +(2) in VI

productions= complete one large & two small projects

Diagram E. Matrix Organization for a Curriculum

Career Competences for Skill Development

Many different lists have been developed to define the essential career and life-related competences that higher education should provide every student. One presumption in these lists of college educational objectives is that elementary and secondary schools provide a basic set of skills and that the job of higher education is to build on these skills. Another approach to defining these basic skills is to start from scratch and build a universal list without regard to the level of education that will provide them. Most colleges that have listed competences for skill development have defined them quite broadly. These broad definitions of competences often aggregate differing modes or forms for exhibiting a competence. For example, one competence might be defined as adequate communication skills. This educational objective says nothing about alternative modes, such as writing, picturing, or speaking. Communication skills are also quite different, depending on the topics covered (such as sports, history, or engineering); by the intent of communication (to be descriptive, explanatory, or interesting); or by the style or form employed (journalistic, encyclopedic, or stream of consciousness). Still another basis for defining communication skills is by the media involved--television, conversation, or print.

The question of what competences learners have acquired--regardless of how--and demonstrate at the community college is important. These exhibited competences are the raw materials for the education process. Most four-year colleges and universities prescribe some basic qualities and characteristics for all students they will enroll. By contrast, higher education at a community college is open to all. An assessment might be made at the outset of the unrecognized and latent competences covering a wide spectrum of skills possessed by learners coming to a community college. This assessment could be part of the enrollment process. A number of colleges now offer assistance in special courses to audit life skills from the experience of potential learners to qualify for partial credit. We propose to extend this activity in the scope of competences considered and to pay less attention, if any, to the credit considerations. This kind of a competence inventory would best emphasize the learner's strengths instead of citing his deficiencies.

This procedure could be a significant first step in establishing a sense of self-worth and identity for the community college learner.

A competence inventory would be a valuable tool for counseling. Additional assessments might supplement transcripts, if the skills inventory was updated during the learners' experience at the community college.

The number of skills which could potentially be developed through a community college experience is unbounded. Efforts at compiling competence targets for skill development by faculty and administrators at various schools have produced long lists. Trying to further specify these skills in terms of assessable and demonstrable factors has proved difficult. The most promising approach seems to be to select a few highly specific, narrowly defined competences and to accept demonstration of them in any of a number of different topics covering most foreseeable areas of application.

Identifying career competences--not merely job skills but as a means for furthering one's career--is a task that requires special attention. A first problem is to keep the number of competences identified to a reasonable number. Participation of faculty is necessary to assure that the skills selected for development can, in fact, be taught. Seeing that an appropriate range of diverse competences are identified is necessary so that whole domains are not overlooked. Since the categorization of learning objectives has been widely experienced, but lowly valued, it will be difficult to obtain a fresh look. It also has to be remembered that no lists are forever, all can be changed.

Topical Foci for Becoming Informed

The number of topics of potential interest to prospective learners and potential employers is very large. To deal with a potentially unmanageable number of topics, educators have divided subjects into areas of study. Various schemes have been used. All these schemes tend to lead to the organization of educational offerings which cover broad areas at little depth. To gain greater

familiarity with more of the subject domain, intimacy with topics is sacrificed.

The implied goal of education is to cover all major areas of knowledge in some depth. This supposedly will produce well-rounded students. The most obvious way to proceed on this goal is to rely heavily on so-called survey courses. Typically, survey courses use broad generalizations and highly selective materials in order to cover a large subject domain. The abstract generalizations in such courses dampen student enthusiasm as they seem imposed on the examples rather than drawn from them.

The principles used to organize and illustrate topics generally remain unexamined. The existence of this framework for exposition implies to a learner that the world is already categorized. The ability to label a subject area conveys to the learner the idea that it is "known" and to some extent "owned" by others. Thus, learners seldom, if ever, experience the process of identifying general concepts which they can then use to understand and explain their own particular experiences and insights. Instead, learners are usually taught general concepts first. These suggest that a learner's experiences have to be fitted into these general conceptual frameworks to be understood. The general frameworks are asserted by the educational process as being "true" and not merely convenient, interesting, orderly.

The most serious fault of existing definitions for the labels of topics used in curricular organization is that they exclude the possibility of the learner developing the content of the course from his own experience. Most academic course work, even laboratory exercises and cooperative apprenticeships, present--according to predetermined categories--the knowledge and experience of the topic. Because of this formatted presentation, the learner has very little emotional relationship to the information. The learner experiences little conflict about the correctness of observations or possible alternatives for the way a topic is organized. Questions about the utility of information as a reliable basis for action seldom surface. This means participation in the educational process is experienced as a necessary indoctrination and not as an emotionally charged process of discovery. The consequences of various ways

of organizing information within topics is a vital educational experience.

The goal of "affective education" is not simply to introduce the study of emotions themselves. Rather, affective education is the idea of infusing an important component of life--emotion--into the process of transmitting knowledge, skills, attitudes, beliefs, plus all the other things which education is supposed to deliver.

There is clear evidence that most of the basic skills, such as reading, are learned more effectively if both the reason for learning and the experience of learning have important, emotion-laden meanings for the learner. Experiences with the newly urbanized who are part of so-called "invasions" in metropolitan Latin America have shown the value of highly emotive, even inflammatory, materials in teaching basic reading. Work by a New York psychologist, originally directed to develop materials for teaching gifted children to read, employed dramatizations to give emotional impact to even the constituent parts of the letters of the alphabet. This reading system was called after the labels for the components of individual letters "ball-stick-bird." It proved to be effective not only with gifted children, but--to the surprise of the psychologist, achieved outstanding results with retarded children. (See Ivan Illich's book, Deschooling Society and Dr. Renee Fuller's article, "Breaking Down the IQ Walls: Severely Retarded People Can Learn to Read (Ball-Stick-Bird)" in October 1974 Psychology Today.) Several criteria might be kept in mind in the selecting of topical foci. First, for community college offerings, abstractly defined topics covering broad areas should be avoided. Instead, specific interests with timeliness and local significance should be used. Examples of this approach to course definition can be found in the catalog of the University of California, Santa Cruz. Second, the topic should be defined in terms of the scope of inquiry and type of activities that will actually be a part of the course work. The current tendency is to state in topic definitions what skills or subjects will be covered, but not how. Such topic definitions do not reflect the actual content of the experience in the course. Third, the topic should include the definition of an individual or group product that will be completed during the course. An example of a good

topic definition might be readings in anthropology to organize movie scripts.

Topic areas are a way to relate to potential employers. Selection of topics should be done with this in mind. Gaining access to experiential settings inside the world of work requires that topics for instruction be used as a strategy to produce strong matches with the way in which the work is understood and codified by employers. To illustrate: "The History of Labor Management Relations" is not likely to strike a chord of recognition and interest that would motivate enthusiastic involvement by employers or unions. A better topic definition might be, "The Evolution of Labor Management Relations in the Bakery Industry in Los Angeles--With Particular Attention to Van de Kamps." This topic would be of interest to Van de Kamps and the American Federation of Bakery Workers, as well as related professionals and government personnel. It also provides an affective basis and specific "for instances" for discussing the more general implications of this specific history.

Learners with such a narrow topic would have immediate access to direct accounts of what took place. How history is used to shape the future by informing present decisions would be clear. Learners would be able to compare what they uncover themselves with journalistic accounts and historical statements. They would learn of disagreements concerning not only motivations and opinions, but differences about facts. Knowledge gained in such specific inquiry will have more transference to subsequent experiences with labor management relations than would a survey course on the general topic. The place of the general, integrative, and theoretical survey course is as the capstone for the graduate studies of specialists. One can speculate that since survey courses are invented and taught by graduates, they are based on a course these teachers wish they'd had to complete their studies. Whatever the reasons, survey courses were definitely not invented by entering learners.

Evaluating and Selecting Competence Areas and Topical Foci

Competency areas are nothing like topical foci. Thus, the process for creating categorical systems for dividing domains of competence and demarcating

divisions between topics will be very different. Further, the criteria for including or excluding topics and competences from a curriculum, (once they've been differentiated) are unique to each. Next, something about these differences.

Areas of competence have more stable properties. This makes it likely that development in competency areas will be evolutionary. That is, a new area of competence will, over a period of years, grow into recognition or an older area will be subdivided into more differentiated competences. Competences tend to be generic to the definition of human potential and are related to the spectrum of purposive actions individuals can take. Finally, competence areas must be tested in action. That is, competences require some experiential assessment of how well the learner can perform, rather than an examination of retained information.

By contrast, topical foci tend to be situationally defined. The compelling qualities, relevance, or significance of a topic is likely transitory. The word topical itself connotes this character. Donald Schon makes a similar point in observing that the U.S. can, at any one time, have no more than five or six truly national interests.

It is difficult to point out the exact moment when a new topic was created. Nonetheless, most seem to appear instantaneously. Their emergence can usually be traced to a confluence of opportunity and interest. Typically, some event takes place and that event somehow is transformed into a metaphor for a larger set of concerns or issues. As such a topic emerges, it is framed and defined by interpretations and established positions. Thus, topics are highly context-specific in character. Further, since topics consist of items of information, a person's knowledge or ability to recall information that describes a topic can be tested.

Table No. IV below suggests a process for negotiating definitions of competence areas and topical foci with each of the four important interests in community colleges. The process is different for both topics and competences. Each of the four interest groups views topics and competences uniquely and requires different actions to prod change.

The four major interests in community colleges we have identified are the faculty, learners, community, and employers. In Table IV the (1) present definition, (2) expected evolution, and (3) impetus for redefinition are suggested for each of these interests and for both competence areas and topical foci. These concepts are not intended as definitive observations, but as takeoff points for further discussion.

	Competence Areas	Topical Foci
BUREAUCRATIC Faculty	1) Method-based academic divisions --English, mathematics, musical performance... 2) Addition of new disciplinary specialities 3) Organization of higher positions	1) Subject-based academic divisions--literature, history, musicology... 2) Recognition for new area of scholarship 3) Creation of more positions
SENSUAL Learners	1) Kinds of abilities--writing, calculating, playing an instrument... 2) Advantage in new techniques 3) Discovering fresh capacities	1) Domains of knowledge--readings, backgrounds, styles of music 2) Relevance for new consciousness 3) Exploring unprecedented frontiers
NORMATIVE Community	1) Skills needed to transact affairs--communicating, reasoning, musical expression... 2) Emergence of original skills 3) Need for advanced proficiencies	1) Entities that have dealings--definition of expertise, present practices, musical 2) Negotiation of additional concerns 3) Requirement for new understandings
PRAGMATIC Employers	1) Elements of job specifications--report preparation, estimating, playing positions, instrumental specialties (fingering)... 2) Create new specialty positions 3) Building new capabilities	1) Areas of organizational responsibility--subject specialists, staff investigators 2) Demand for wider cognizance 3) Exploiting new fields

Table IV. Negotiating Competency Areas and Topical Foci

Undertaking the process of reviewing potential competence areas and topical foci and then selecting from each particular ones to serve as targets for curricular concentration can be expected to yield several kinds of benefits. With respect to the faculty, the process should produce increased motivation. The faculty's involvement in defining areas they find particularly interesting and relevant would stimulate them to more animated and committed teaching. Combining specific competences with interesting, narrowly defined topics would increase the amount of attention and scholarship the faculty could bring to course offerings. It would also decrease the amount of rote repetition and arbitrary compliance. Hopefully, a little inspired inquiry would displace some unmotivated ritual which is currently the dominant characteristic of most instruction.

Increasing the emotional and personal meaning of the content of courses for the faculty creates a nonmonetary compensation--job enrichment. Such nonsalary benefits as peer recognition, ego enhancement to scholarly autonomy, and identification with the classes' accomplishments will be increasingly important to keep faculty salaries at reasonable levels--particularly as aggressive collective bargaining becomes part of higher education.

Giving learners a role in determining competence areas and topical foci for course offerings will raise their interest. Further, it will give them an opportunity to develop negotiative skills and exercise responsibility. An active role for learners in negotiating subject areas for course work means that a greater number of potential learners could be interested in the possible offerings of a community college. The requirement for obtaining a minimum number of interested learners before a course can be offered will encourage learners and prospective learners to become active in the aggregation of class-sized groups. Faculty-learner collaboration can be expected in defining meaningful courses. An exchange that would list course definition being actively pursued would enable groups of students promoting similar offerings to work out combination-of-ingredient courses with faculty. Learner-derived topics for courses will have greater apparent utility to learners. It would be particularly good if part of the task of putting together a curriculum for a course of study involved negotiating its content

with prospective employers. Multiple section courses could be developed that would have a common topical focus--say meat processing--while covering three different competency areas--say one group on advertising copy-writing, one on quality control techniques, and another on distribution practices in business.

Faculty, often in teams, could serve as guides to learners rather than pedagogues. Learners would profit from the direct experiences of the course even if what they "got" was different from the teacher's intentions. Learners, instead of being somewhat incapacitated by the faculty's command of a competence or topic, would be energized by a process of mutual discovery. This would be particularly true for learners who take an active part in negotiating a particular offering.

The process of exploring and selecting curriculum also affects the community. As a community college develops a unique set of offerings and style of education, greater community identity with the college will develop. The community college can thereby become an active agent for the community to realize its shared objectives. Community concerns and interests--such as need for industrial development to create more jobs or lack of low-cost housing for elderly citizens--can become topics for course work. This will make the accomplishments of learners "real" in the sense that their work will have direct benefit to and be noticed by the community.

The learners, by becoming a resource to local organizations, will come to be valued by the community for their intellectual and technical accomplishments rather than merely occasionally praised for their compulsive study efforts. A part in working on the community's agenda provides positive feedback to learners. It also creates a more central and visible role for the community college. Transactional rather than symbolic interaction between college and community will spark aspirations in members of the community to come up with additional educational opportunities. Some, if not all, of these are important leads to employment possibilities. Education will become vital to the whole community as the community

recognizes that the college is prepared to deal with their aspirations as they perceive them and does not try to shape the community's interest to be what the college happens to offer.

Public and private employers can be attracted to participate in the establishment of competency areas and topical foci for course offerings. This involvement can be used to shape employer's expectations about the abilities and attributes of prospective employees (currently learners) to be more definite and positive. Establishing ongoing relationships with employers will likely increase the number of graduates who are actively solicited for jobs which otherwise would be restricted to persons with long experience. Relationships initiated by the community college between employers and individuals or groups of learners in a particular program can be maintained as further education is pursued elsewhere and possibly lead to financial assistance, and eventually a job. A more likely possibility is that new jobs, which otherwise might have never existed at all, will be created out of the interaction between the college and local employers. Employers are reluctant to create specialties in the absence of experience with particular persons who might fill them.

Involvement by employers in the program of the community college leads to definition of more narrowly targeted competences as well as the identification of more finely specified topics for course work. Providing concrete anchors in practice for course work will probably increase learners' interest. The task of the faculty then will become less one of interesting and motivating students, but move to pointing out how the examples from their narrow specific interest relate to much broader and more abstract concerns. For example, a learner's initial interest in a consumer's cooperative can be directed to such larger concerns as the role of cooperatives in marketing, the functioning of credit operations, methods for recruiting membership, the economics of wholesale purchasing operations, securing of lower-cost contract health services, and ways to ensure meaningful participation of the membership in management.

Relating Competency Areas to Topical Foci in a Curricular Framework

Once a set of competency areas and topical foci has been established, then curriculum for various kinds of certifications can be specified in terms of offerings within these domains. Typically, a curriculum for a specific certification would indicate which particular competences are required, along with how many general optional competences are necessary. Also, the curriculum would define the topics that learners are expected to know. It would not be necessary for all competences to be taught in all topic areas. By tracking student demand, highly productive matches between competences and topics might be developed such as a course that teaches writing skills in terms of the field of electronic journalism (radio and television).

A preliminary list of competences and topics might be developed in order to map the coverage of the present offerings of the college. This is one way to assess the current curriculum. This type of matrix map would point out areas of high concentration and overlap as well as pointing out domains that are not served at all.

It is not necessary to serve all topical domains. Some competence-topic pairs will be irrelevant, others have a bad fit--such as statistical mathematics and food presentation. Distributing courses throughout all possible cells of the matrix would be grandiose and superfluous. Instead, the objective is to first look at how the colleges' present offerings are distributed in the matrix map of the complete conceptual space. The next step is to try to reallocate courses to improve the match between learners' interests and employer needs within the context of the community's sense of priorities and directions. Actively negotiating offerings that further the interest of faculty, learners, employers, and local leaders reasserts the community college's role as an agent for community development. Many new and more relevant relationships and agreements can be created by examining possibilities suggested through the matrix mapping analysis.

Management-by-Objectives and a New Curricular Framework

The formal process called management-by-objectives has become an increasingly

popular approach to organizational development in business enterprises. Interest in applying management-by-objectives methods to the public sector has also grown. A management-by-objectives program is indicated when an organization does not have a sufficiently well-defined set of objectives that have wide agreement in most of the organization as being fair measures of their joint contributions. Obviously, overlapping and disparate objectives in organizations lead to counter-productive behavior. Common objectives, however, without real and parallel consequences for the individuals will not produce more cooperative efforts to improve the performance of an organization.

The first task in a management-by-objective program is to establish common objectives. This requires lots of discussion. Next, those in the organization must agree on measures. This process tends to be reductionist. That is, after discussions that are circular and diffuse, pressure mounts to select a few broad objectives around which the organization's energies and attention can be brought to bear.

However, in institutions that purport to deliver higher education--even at the community college level--a major societal purpose for the organization is not to narrow education to a few general goals, but to enrich the educational context with lots of firm but narrow agreements. This means that a management-by-objectives process cannot be usefully applied at an institution-wide level because the process leads to highly general and abstract objectives that have little consequence for the choices of actions by individuals in the college. Management-by-objectives procedures can be used at the level of course clusters or study programs to produce greater relevance and diversity in the offerings of the college by defining a specific combination of topics and competences for each course. Participation by faculty, counseling staff, and others would also produce a greater sense of self-direction and a focusing, as Wittgenstein would say, on situations that are the case. This would force development of a marketing instead of a rhetorical basis for deciding about which offerings and services best support the learning of individuals being served.

Relationship of Faculty and Departments to New Curricular Framework

The present way departments are defined in most higher education organizations use both competences (for example: English, mathematics, art...) and topics (for example: journalism, nursing, recreation...). Some departments define themselves using aspects of both competences and topics (for example: engineering, medicine, music...). At the community college level, competency-defined departments tend to dominate. Focusing on methods (how) usually makes education less abstract. Supposedly, stressing general competency builds a base for more detailed learning. This approach to education can be said to move from the general to the specific. While this is conceptually compelling, it runs counter to empirical evidence. Both the educational interests and achievement motivation of students, as well as learning theory, suggest that educational experiences are more effective if they move from specific to the general. Most community college learners have had little if any success with the general-to-the-specific approach to pedegogical education that characterized their primary and secondary school experience.

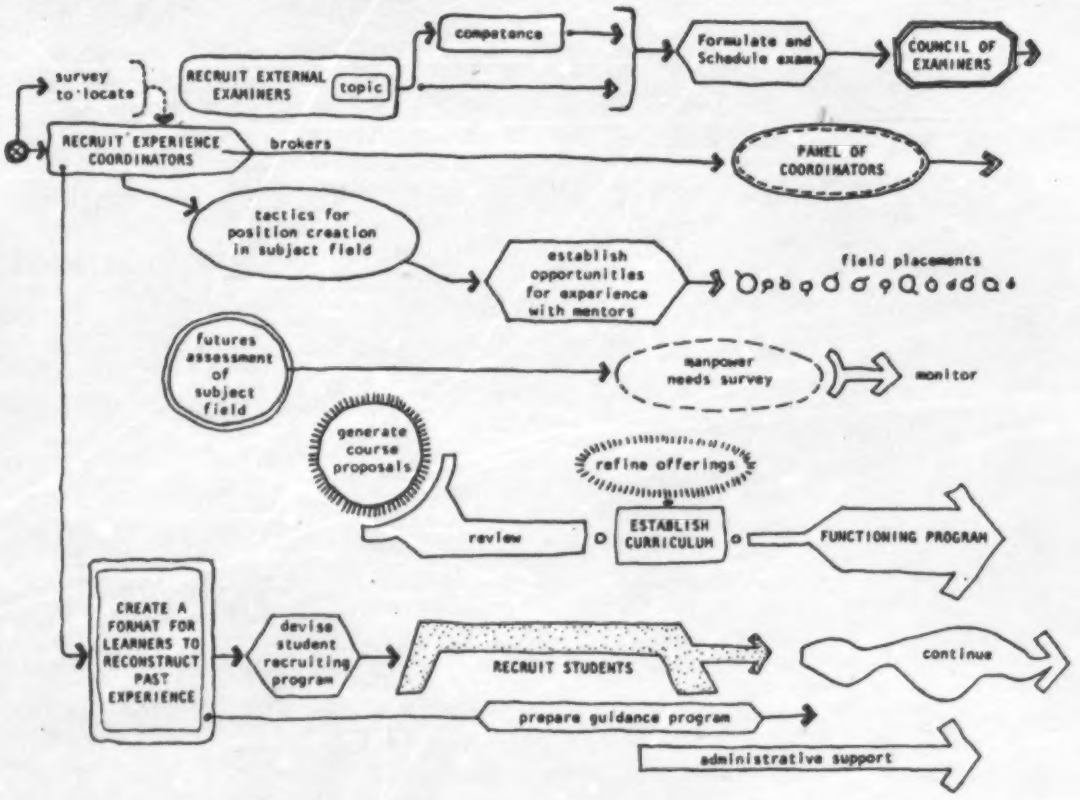


Diagram F. Establishing a High-Performance Program

Therefore, it seems wise to emphasize an alternative approach--to provide another opportunity. A specific-to-general experiential approach to higher education is one important alternative. Making learning concrete and emotional will fuel greater interest and lead to more accomplishment. Once a learner possesses sufficient experience, there is a need for more abstract general propositions to frame it and make it useful.

The Importance of Productions by Learners

Actually doing something, completing it, and having results witnessed by others is an important learning experience. Beyond the experience of the doing, there remains a product that can be used again and again to demonstrate one's competence to others who were not present for its production. Small and limited, but nonetheless complete productions, should be regularly required of all learners in community colleges.

For many types of courses, the creation of productions is already a part of the learning mode. Examples would be computer programming, art studies, and instrumental music courses. However, for most courses, writing papers and taking tests is the biggest part of the community college experience. Finishing projects is more like life than writing papers and taking tests. Creating a verisimilitude between school and life is increasingly important. It can convey to the learner what is important to know how to do and to be able to get past--in terms of fear of failure or ridicule--the individual's resistance to concrete actions. Productions enable learners to demonstrate convincingly to the outside world that they can be accomplished.

Projects such as creating and performing a dance, making an investigation, assembling a piece of equipment, or conducting a demonstration should be regularly assigned to every learner. Productions should be integrative of a student's interests and studies. While choosing a project idea is important, it is more important to start something. Providing examples of projects to illustrate how the more abstract studies and skills can be incorporated will be particularly useful. General directions and suggestions can be given, but the projects should be self-defined by the learners.

These tangible products of a learner's accomplishments serve an intermediate purpose by integrating many different studies. Also, such projects can become permanent parts of a learner's record of accomplishment. This part

of a record is irrefutable in applying for employment or demonstrating one's interest in specific areas to qualify for further education. Even if there is almost no match between an employer's particular interests and the nature of the projects the student undertakes, the fact that projects of various types have been completed, in spite of all the problems involved in actually doing anything, is very important. Productions can also be significant in recommending a student for further academic work at a university. They also can serve as a clear substantial basis for selection of learners for financial assistance. The diagram below indicates the relationship of various roles in the community college to the process of completing productions.

Work by learners on productions can serve as a focus for various kinds of personal counseling as well as psychology courses. Undertaking any kind of project requires that learners confront how they allocate time, how to deal with distractions, how to come to terms with feelings of incompetence, how to overcome the fear of failure, how to keep going through changes in direction, how to revise ambitions, how to proceed in ambiguous situations. These are very important lessons. They could be taught as an abstract part of a general psychology curriculum. But, these lessons are far more effective if tied directly to a learner's experience in attempts to accomplish a specific project. Many minor projects should be required of all students and not just one or two major efforts. Financing learner projects and developing adjunct project advisors could be done to create an effective bridge between the community college and local organizations.

External Examination as a Basis for Community Involvement

Examinations at community colleges, not unlike most of higher education, can be termed internal. That is, evaluation of course work and accomplishment is done by those who are also involved in providing the learning. This process is circular and is subject to many kinds of distortions. The so-called grade inflation is one byproduct.

Having the process of learning tied into the valuation of that learning makes the utility of learning entirely arbitrary. Grade inflation is universally acknowledged. On the other hand, introducing universal, rigid, politically determined standards for academic work from outside the institution would be repressive. On the other hand, more pluralistic, flexible, situationally relevant ties might be established with the community to assess learning accomplishments.

As faculty have more openly sought students, more specifically FTE, offerings have been slanted to be more "relevant," "topical," and "interesting." Some revised course offerings are even openly solicitous of the student's selection. It might be concluded from these observations that learning is becoming more superficial. Countering these trends does not mean that the faculty should be encouraged to be more polemical in their approach to casting down wisdom. Making course work relevant and motivating is one thing, pandering is another. What should be questioned is the continuation of internal examination that is increasingly suspect by those outside the community college who use grades and related examinations to make their decisions about the suitability and competence of learners as continuing students and prospective employees.

One initiative to remedy this situation, and also to produce additional benefits, is to create a role in the community college for external examiners. External examiners could be recruited at first for selected topical foci and competence areas. Their ranks could be expanded as both the faculty and administration learn to make use of their skills. External examiners would be a source of positive inputs by the community to shape the outcomes of college offerings. Employers in particular would be a valuable source of concrete evaluative criteria and would give meaning to course requirements. External examiners would assure that courses meet prevailing community requirements and do not maintain arbitrary or irrelevant standards. Learners, teachers, and doers would each be profitably involved in establishing more meaningful intstructional objectives.

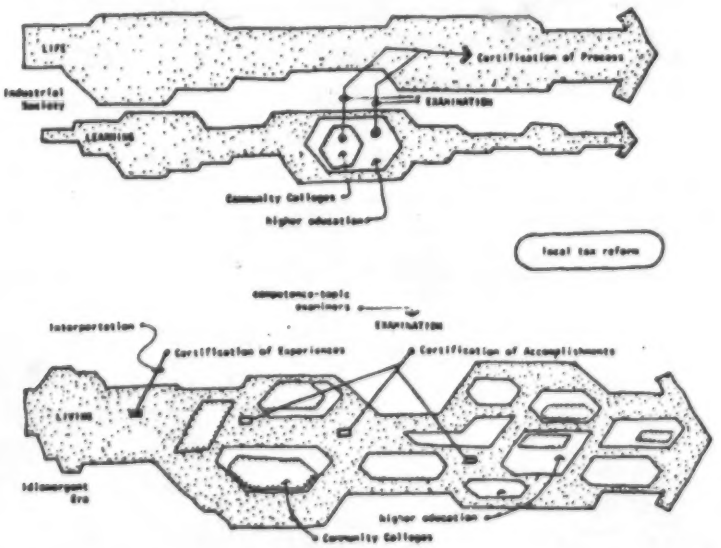


Diagram G. Integration of Learning and Living

External examiners, in the performance of their duties, would become directly familiar with the products of the community college, namely its learners (and maybe of greater importance in the future; its faculty). The examiners would be a source of contacts for learners, not only for employment but for guidance in selecting careers and as mentors in their larger life.

The external exams would best be devised and carried out in a way so they would serve as a source of learning in themselves. This makes particularly apt examinations that are highly situational--using simulations of real-life situations and activities to evaluate the responses of learners and indirectly the qualities of instruction. Exams might require that the learners confront and deal with dilemmas and problems asked in a context in which they would be encountered in the world. Organized in this way, examinations would serve as learning experiences. These kinds of examinations, instead of being dreaded, educationally-irrelevant events in which one passes or fails, would be more like events in a track meet--where all the participants learn how well they perform while asserting and sharing ideas about how to improve in the future. Also, learners and teachers would be teamed together to produce high performances. This may be why coaches are relatively more effective than history professors in stimulating committed performances to high standards.

The Community College as a Broker

The pathos of the disadvantaged community is its isolation. Negative reinforcements abound. Cynicism, begat of the experience of unsuccessful efforts, makes trying again increasingly difficult. Connections to opportunities for positive experiences is more important for students from disadvantaged communities than any amount of information or knowledge. Individuals need more introductions and wider access to, plus increased contact with, the world of work as well as other institutions in the larger community. The community college can perform this broker function. Learners should be stimulated to define projects and short-term assignments in cooperation with government agencies, private corporations, or entrepreneurial groups.

Seriously pursued, the role of broker requires that the college create more functions that entice participation from active, interested, achieving people in the community. Such new roles might include external examiners,

outside experience coordinators, and mentor-advisors. The college can trade symbolic recognition and rewards for counsel and assistance. The community college might host workshops and similar events that would enable prominent persons to work intensively with learners to together develop new products such as TV scripts or clothing designs as well as develop program ideas and alternative positions on political initiatives.

The diagram below compares the relationships between learning and life in the recent industrial society with the future idiomergent society. It also contrasts the ways in which learning is transferred into action. There are several important points to note. One, the closer integration of learning and life. Two, the greater distribution over the life span of community college activities--not only later in life (continuing education) but earlier to supplement secondary and even elementary education. Three, a growth in the amount of educational effort provided by nonschool organizations with increasing recognition and legitimization for this learning.

Certification of Competence and Experience

The present learning accomplishments of colleges are most often defined in terms of credits (or units) for the successful completion of course work acceptable to a certificated faculty member. In an increasing number of colleges, advanced standing and credits are being awarded for demonstrated competence and relevant experience. High school equivalency exams are now virtually universal. One can expect mounting pressure from civil service boards and state education agencies for similar validations for some, if not all, college-level course work.

To a large extent, the curriculum for community colleges is predicated on the continuing high school graduate. However, current experience indicates that the community college has an equal, if not larger, responsibility for serving the mature learner. The average age for learners in many urban community colleges is now in the late twenties. A significant number of learners are beyond forty. The quantity of mature students can be expected to rise as (1) the cohort of students from high-birth-rate years mature, (2) mid-career and mid-life shifts with accompanying crises are more commonly experienced by adults, (3) social and technological changes more rapidly obsolesce earlier education, and (4) high tax payments for public

education spur adults to demand offerings related to their own needs and not simply serve the community's youth.

A variety of methods for certification of competence and experience exist. Others can be developed. Questions about the equivalence of informal learning and life experiences in comparison to formal course work are interesting, but not insurmountable. The important issues concern the development of useful, dependable, and accurate certifications that reflect the individual's experience. These certifications should convey an individuals's competence and experience and not be overtly biased culturally by simply indicating level of attainment (or lack of) on highly selective factors. Instead of being rooted in abstract factors, certifications should be based on practical wisdom. They should describe an individual's ability to perform in situations that can be realistically expected. The Lindenwood Colleges, among others, are currently developing narrative transcripts with many of these properties. These accounts, since there are no universal criteria, have to state the specific accomplishment and indicate the criteria used for making judgments. Learners should participate in arranging and augmenting their evaluative and biographical information as an important skill to master.

Reconceptualizing Life Experiences

For most students, even those who have recently completed high school, performance in course work does not portray an accurate picture of "where they're at." Neither does course work performance indicate what they're ready for next. Going to school is far from the entirety of anyone's experience, particularly for the older person returning to higher education. Extracting the extra-school experiences, individual interests, and surplus competences and then assembling these into a coherent, focused, and directed view of the individual is an important undertaking. To some extent, the better services that assist individuals in preparing resumes do this now. Assisting individuals in reconceptualizing their experiences may be one of the most useful roles for the community college. Such reconceptualization points out to the learner his or her strengths and successes which formerly were buried by negative associations and personal insecurity. The activity of reconceptualizing one's past provides a renewed, probably unique, sense of direction and purpose for moving aggressively into what lies ahead. Reconceptualizing the past is an important step in making college course work meaningful to today's learner.

The Time Perspective of Learners

There are many sources of information that guide learners in their choice of pursuits and which they use to draw insights about what's so. The diagram that follows illustrates one way of relating these disparate sources of information using a chronographic representation. The subject of this depiction is any current situation. The learners should come to be aware of distinctions in the ways of knowing about this current situation--alternative philosophic perspectives. This information should not be abstract information about comparative philosophic systems, but concrete examples of the different implications for action that result from the adoption of one or another philosophy by parties to the situation at hand.

Further, there are likely to be differences in how the antecedents are selected and interpreted leading to competing roots (or antecedents) which purport to explain the current situation. By the same token, there are various exploratory futures which suggest different versions of what needs to be done (or not done). Depicting possible outcomes in concrete form and using information from experiences, backgrounds, and futures to inform action should become more conscious acts for learners. This socially constructed view of reality can become the metaphor for rational action, replacing the scientific method which has become more limited in its applicability to everyday concerns.

Packaging Learning in Time-Relevant Segments

From the time perspective of the learner, selecting college courses as presently offered constitutes a major commitment. Semesters, even the shorter quarters, represent extremely long periods in the planning horizon of learners. This is true both for students just out of high school, as well as adults who are returning to school for transition, advancement, or broadening. It is very difficult for individuals whose lives have so many contingencies to allocate their attention for 13 to 18 weeks in advance.

The modal form for present offerings--lectures plus homework with papers

and exams--plus the lack of specificity for course content gives the learner little positive basis for selection. Avoidance of failure, rather than seeking success, seems to dominate course selection. This pattern of thinking has fostered the practice of signing up for lots of courses and then dropping many of them. The major assistance the learner has in selecting courses are the supplemental guides that are sometimes prepared by independent organizations. These rate both course and instructors, but often emphasize the narrow perspective--getting a unit of credit for the least effort.

Packaging course work in shorter spurts could produce many benefits. Short-term courses might include such variations as: the extensive weekend--starting on Friday night and finishing on Sunday afternoon; three long five-hour evenings scheduled a week apart; a solid two weeks of everyday meetings. Many other variations are possible to suit course requirements and learner availabilities. An asynchronous curriculum would enable the community college to function more as a "host" for learning experiences and less as a supplier of units of educational credit. Given a more opportunity-rich environment, learners can be expected to behave more inquisitively and aggressively toward scheduling and participation in course assignments and discussions.

Several demonstrations have indicated that short-term immersion in topics and competences produces more learning than less dense contact over a more extended period. This is not to suggest that extended contact with the students to mark their longitudinal progress through a particular curriculum is not beneficial. Such continuity for learning, however, might better be provided by a series of program-long, core seminars required for completing a particular curriculum. In the standard two-year format of the community college, such core seminar offerings might emphasize life planning, career competences, presentation of self, and opportunity discovery during the first year with more specialized content subjects being taken up in the second year.

Intensive short-term courses can also impel greater faculty enthusiasm and attention to preparation. It requires relatively little conceptual

preparation to lecture on a familiar topic for short periods, like an hour, based on notes from past courses. However, important conceptual preparation and psychic involvement is required when one has to organize a learning experience that must address a focused topic plus competence considerations over four or five straight hours. We believe short courses will establish a more vital rhythm for campus life in the community college.

An Individual's Growth

Two contrasting strategies for an individual to pursue in his or her personal growth and development might be labeled "fitting in" and "carving out" Both are usually present to some extent. Their relationship to the growth process is illustrated in the diagram below.

The "fitting in" strategy assumes that the definitions of what one wants to be or could be are well established in life's situations. Following this strategy, individuals use the processes of education to work on themselves to personally develop to fit the mold.

The contrasting strategy, "carving out" assumes that individuals shape situations to suit their abilities and intentions. To follow this strategy, individuals use the processes of education to work on their arrangements with their community of relevance, to alter its form, and to shape this context to form a role for them.

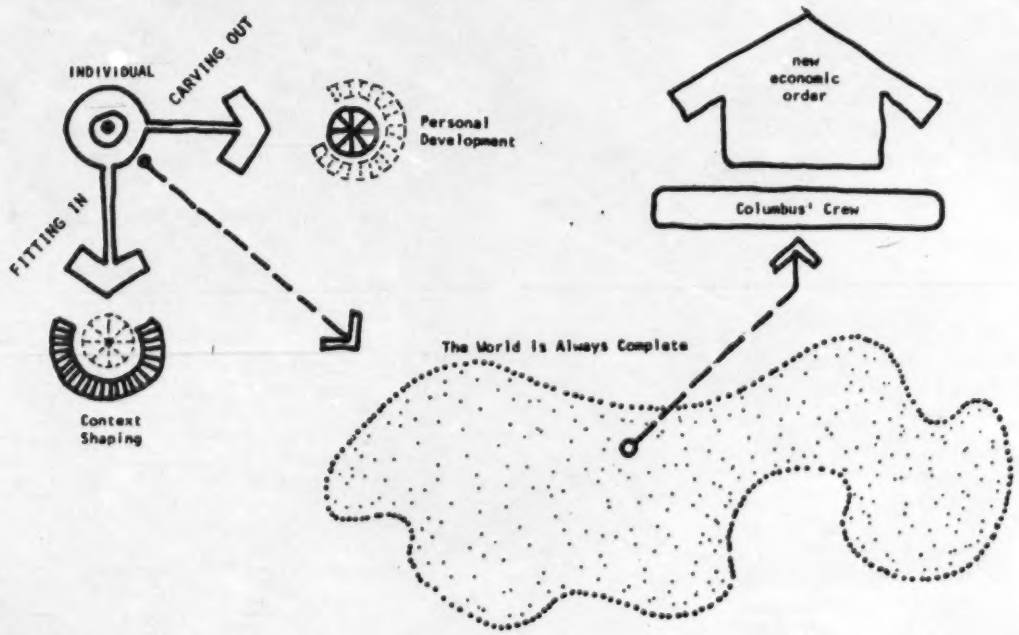


Diagram H. Formation of Positions

A combined strategy would integrate efforts in personal development with actions in context shaping while establishing with the learner a clear locus of control for education. Educational experience should clearly point out to learners that the world--and its organizations--always find themselves complete. Consider Columbus' crew. If they had been asked, upon arriving in the new world, is there anyone you found lacking?, they would not be able to think of an unfilled need. Neither would they probably be able to identify anyone who had too little to do. This suggests that one important component of education is learning how to create "space" with organizations for negotiating one's potential contributions and value. A new economic order is being established that gives primary attention to the utilization of human resources in contrast to earlier emphases on financial capital and raw materials and energy. Hence, the great expension of public and private service activities. These opportunities exist not only in the U.S., but throughout the world--particularly in establishing "appropriate" service levels in developing nations outside of the principal urban areas.

And Many, Many More

What follows is likely to remind the reader of a radio and touting the long list of items included in a mail-order bargain package. Any attempt to describe the fundamental changes in a social institution, such as the community college, leaves a series of related and complementary actions trailing after it. A few of these "other actions" that seem significant are indicated below. Many other actions that should well be considered will occur to readers. The specific set of transormational actions is not important; no revolution is ever completed. Rather, this paper emphasizes the significance of a new orientation for the community college--society's agent for community development and personal renewal. This role for the community college can be established by involving the faculty, learners, community, and employers in participative management of the education. This process will have to be orchestrated by the leadership of the community college's administration.

Additional transformational initiatives for community colleges include:

- Create Roles for Practitioners in Education that involve short time commitments for community member participation: from short stints as program advisory groups and occasional discussions with learners

to assignments to part-time positions (say, four hours per week) as mentors for assigned learners, guest lecture assignments for periodic presentations, adjunct faculty positions to supervise course sections under supervising faculty member, or nomination to serve as an external examiner for a particular topic or competence.

- Find Places for Learners in the World of Work that would encompass exposure to both government and private organizations in activities that might include familiarization tours, special project assignments, interne and apprentice positions, and full-time equivalent jobs using more than one learner to cover a position with provisions for associate-status memberships in unions, paying proportionate dues where appropriate.

- Provide for Learning as Teachers by Helping those in the community with aptitudes, qualifications, or experiences to receive assistance in organizing and presenting their information in order to become resources on special topics for use in regular courses, special programs, and the learning laboratory (in a medium that is appropriate) and in this way involve many citizens who would be unlikely to participate in education programs as students.

- Prepare Learners for Overseas Employment in the light of the growing demand for professional and technical as well as communications and management personnel outside the U.S. in developing nations and in remote areas of the U.S. since demand in the U.S. metropolitan areas is slack while additional qualified personnel continue to be educated.

- Reform the Link with "All Who Pass This Way" to create a nonspatial community of "alumni" who can be induced to continue to serve and be served by the community college--meaning that individual alumni can use the alumni group to magnify their efforts and the community college can use alumni reputations to confirm and validate its performance as an institution.

On to Action

The transformed, mature community college will not evolve by itself. Institutional inertia and protectionistic resistance act to frustrate simplistic efforts to manage change. At the same time, social changes and

chance occurrences surface latent problems and provide timely issues that can be used more opportunistically to promote positive growth in the community college. Thus, a first step in implementation is to catalogue latent problems and potential issues that might trigger events or facilitate occasions for purposive change. Each proposal for improvement should be described generally so that timely ideas and local relevance can be added as opportunities present themselves.

The foregoing suggests that managing change requires a set of master tactics (strategies are still too lofty here) rather than a master plan. Establishing a participative process for involving faculty with learners, learners with employers, employers and the community with faculty, faculty with learners with the community...and all together occasionally, using the appropriate instrumental tasks is most important. These extra-administrative assemblages need to be real working groups with clear purposes and not merely symbolic bodies. Each ongoing work group can then be available for inserting transforming initiatives into the ongoing process of institutional definition. Interaction between these different interests, when structured around sensitive and significant points, can be expected to produce many tactical opportunities for enterprising administrators to guide and direct change. The administrative style is to create a fluid situation--avoiding turmoil on the one hand and rigidity on the other.

Funding to enable community colleges to transform themselves into effective agents of the society for community development will not be available from internal sources. Even special federal programs interested in improving the performance of higher education, including Title I of the Higher Education Act, are not easily directed to producing institutional transformations. Special corporate and foundation support should be sought for demonstrating the potential benefits and values of specific changes in institutional practices. For such demonstrations, suspensions of "normalcy" can be arranged for a limited period. These demonstrations provide space for new concepts in community college programs to be born. Once born, credits and benefits for the new program must be liberally passed around to assure support for institutionalizing the special arrangement. All the while, of course, the work of defining next steps in the maturation of the community college continues.